



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
**730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476**  
**Phone: 781-316-3000**

**[webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us)**

## Minutes 04-15-10

**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 15, 2010**  
**5:30-7:00PM**

**Present:** Ethel Doyle, Cindy Bouvier, Kathy Hirsch, Charlie Skidmore, Karen Dillon, John Scheft, Cindy Sheridan, Christine Connolly, Jack Flood, Bryan Gallagher, Emily Vincent, Colleen Leger, Deacon Dzierzawski,

**Attendees: 13**

### **I. Welcome:**

Volunteer Hours: members were given 5 minutes to document recent hours dedicated to Coalition-related activities.

### **II. Upcoming Events:**

#### Volunteers Needed

*Medication Take-Back:* Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> (8:30am-1:00pm): AYHSC and the Board of Health will offer the medication/medical waste disposal event as part of DPW's Community Collection Day. AYHSC is looking for 2-4 volunteers on the day of the event to receive and document collected medications, and to help recycle pill bottles. \*\*\*Event will be held at 51 Grove Street, from 9:00am-1:00pm\*\*\*

*Promoting Take-Back event:* Volunteers needed to help promote event (tell your friends, families, neighbors and coworkers, hang flyers, send emails etc...) Charlie S. said he would include information about the event in an email to AHS parents. Colleen will follow up with Tim R. about a similar email blast to Ottoson parents. Colleen will send information to principals. When promoting event, please encourage community members to assist their elderly family members, neighbors and friends in disposing of their unused meds.

#### Events and Trainings

*Michael Thompson* is presenting at the Secure XII Conference on Monday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The conference "Best Friends/Worst Enemies: Friendship Development, Popularity and Social Cruelty" will be held at Nashoba Technical High School from 9:00am-2:00pm. AYHSC can fund a limited number of members to attend. John Scheft and Cindy Sheridan expressed interest in attending. If interested, please contact Colleen at [cleger@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:cleger@town.arlington.ma.us)

*Northeast Regional Health Dialogue:* Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> (1:30-3:30pm). MDPH Commissioner John Auerbach will release the report "The Health of Massachusetts" at this event, and officials from Gloucester will lead a discussion on their successful Medication Drug Disposal Program. The event will take place at Cruiseport, in Gloucester.

#### Potential Projects

*Parent/community letter:* Community Coalitions across the country are participating in a study on the impact

of parent/community letters on reducing underage drinking, and the potential health, safety and legal implications during prom and graduation season. Many community coalitions have reported using variations of parent letters and published articles to raise awareness about these issues. Colleen inquired about current initiatives like this in Arlington, and representatives from the schools explained that parents and students of AHS are required to sign a contract before attending prom, and that students must take a bus to Junior prom. It was noted that all-night drinking parties following the proms were a major concern. Deacon suggested reaching out to limo companies to remind them of the law re: transporting minors with alcohol. Charlie expressed interest in sending a letter to parents with tips on how to support their children to make safe and healthy choices during prom and graduation season. Colleen will look for examples of such letters and share them with AHS officials.

*Social Norms Campaign:* AYHSC submitted a request to MA Department of Public Health for a graduate student intern to help develop a social norms campaign in Arlington. MDPH has since matched a student from BU School of Public Health with AYHSC for a summer internship. Research shows that youth drinking behaviors are more strongly influenced by perceptions of how much their peers drink than by actual peer drinking. Students at the Ottoson and at Arlington High School have grossly exaggerated perceptions of peer drinking, and AYHSC intends to use a social norms campaign to clarify these misperceptions. Kathy suggested that the Youth Council be involved in this project. \*\*\*If interested in working on this campaign, please email Colleen at [cleger@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:cleger@town.arlington.ma.us)

### **III. Evaluation and Sustainability**

Evaluation: Deacon Dzierzawski, our Coalition evaluator provided updates on the evaluation process, including the use of a new online outputs monitoring system, a refined logic model to address youth marijuana use, AYHSC progress on, and revisions to its DFC Year 2 Action Plan, and a brief synopsis of Coalition outputs and capacity development. He noted that the Coalition had produced over 60 distinct outputs since October, made thousands of media impressions, and generated approximately \$20,000 worth of volunteer hours (likely way under-reported.) Deacon and the evaluation committee will work together to generate an end-of-the-year report for the Coalition. The report will be distributed at the May Coalition meeting. Following his presentation, Deacon distributed a Coalition Process Survey, which he asked AYHSC members to complete during the meeting. Coalition members who were not able to attend the meeting will be receiving the survey by email. PLEASE do take the time to complete the survey; it will be used to improve the overall function of the Coalition.

Sustainability: Colleen distributed an outline of the Coalition's sustainability plan. She noted that it is a working document, and that the Coalition will continue to develop this plan and strategies to sustain prevention initiatives beyond the life of the DFC grant. The Coalition will explore ways to share costs with other Town agencies and generate revenue through fines, surcharges and fees. The Coalition will also continue to apply for foundation and grant funding. Several members observed that we must focus on institutionalizing several key programs and services, including: YRBS, Guiding Good Choices, Diversion Program, Parent Forums. Deacon will conduct a sustainability training in the fall, and will convene a small sustainability committee to spearhead this effort.

### **IV. Updates from Working Groups:**

Guiding Good Choices: The third series concluded on Monday 4/12/10. Emily reported that the workshops went well, and that the parents who attended consistently benefited considerably from the program. Attendance decreased substantially from the first workshop (21 parents) to the last workshop (7). Possible explanations for this drop: weather (extensive rain and flooding, then several warm sunny days), observance of religious holidays or too many participants (possibly overwhelming some parents) at the initial workshop. Colleen will follow up with participants via email to see if they would like to share their contact information with each other. Members recommended running a morning or later-evening workshop series. It was noted that late spring/summer might not be the most convenient time for parents. Plans for the fourth series are underway.

#### Communications:

AYHSC webpage is now accessible via the Town website, under Health and Human Services. YRBS reports and open-ended response summaries are now available through the site, as are updated minutes and a few links to resources. Please email Colleen if there are additional resources that you think should be added to

the webpage.

*AYHSC monthly e-newsletters* will resume this month. E-newsletters were suspended while we waited for our contract to begin with Constant Contact.

*Coalition Corner:* Colleen asked members for ideas for future articles/interviews. Nicole L. the editor of the Arlington Advocate had suggested side-by-side parent/child columns addressing the various pressures affecting teens and parents of teens. Emily suggested reaching out to past participants of GGC to gauge interest there. Please contact Colleen with ideas for future columns.

Diversion: Bryan reported that there will be 27 new Diversion cases. Cindy reported that she and Captain Bongiorno would reach out to Arlington Catholic about Diversion and encourage them to participate in the process in the future.

Community Forum: Members discussed ways to improve marketing strategies and event promotion. We revisited the idea of using a community calendar to avoid scheduling conflicts, but others noted that the Ottoson concert was not solely responsible for the low turnout at the forum. Several members remarked that parents and other community members are exceptionally busy, and that we might want to consider reaching them where they are already convening: mandatory school events, rotary and other private clubs, PTO meetings etc... As for event promotion: John noted that the Coalition must do a better job of making personal connections, promoting events at members' respective organizations, and talking up events in every day conversations. Others suggested making attendance mandatory for athletes, prom-goers, etc... and their parents.

**V. Adjournment**

The next Coalition meeting will be held on May 21, 2010